



Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 3

Helena, Montana 59601

September, 1975

Committee Reconsiders—

Additional Funding Approved

The smoke has cleared from the Legislative Finance Review Committee hearings and the Emergency Medical Services funds, shot through in July, have emerged only slightly damaged.

The damage comes from the delay in planning and in spending the implementation funds that originally had been granted in June and were disallowed by the legislative committee in July.

Instead of having 12 months to plan in, those hired will be cut short. The majority of their work will be due by April when they will have to submit their plans for initial operation funding.

Paul Anderson, who will be working with the planners, said he hopes they will be caught up by late November.

The fund approval also means that regional coordinators can begin work in Missoula and Billings.

They will be responsible for helping oversee the implementation grants awarded to the eight northwestern counties and the 14 southeastern counties.

Coordinators will be on the state EMS Bureau staff because the Bureau is the funds recipient.

The committee's action also released approximately \$50,000 in a professional and EMT grant that was awarded in October, 1974. (The grant expired on September 30, so the release means the bills can be paid.)

One program, for evaluating EMS systems, suffered less delay in starting than the others because the

evaluators had been selected and had started developing evaluation methods and a standardized medical records system.

The federal EMS funds originally had been disallowed by the committee because committee members apparently thought the funds were duplicated in the EMS Bureau's general fund appropriation.

According to this thinking, the general fund appropriation had been made to replace federal planning and training funds that were no longer available. Only part of the implementation money was disallowed by the committee.

However, in the second go-around before the committee, it was explained that the new EMS federal funding was to provide additional training and planning as well as for new programs of evaluation and consultation.

Only two legislators voted against allowing the \$122,000 planning grant, all but \$450,400 of the \$547,563 implementation grant and the additional \$50,000 for training. These legislators were: Rep. Jack K. Moore, R-Great Falls, who had voted for approval of the funds in July, and Sen. Miles Romney, D-Hamilton.

The function of the committee was to review additional monies coming into the state about which the legislature had no knowledge and which might require commitments from future legislatures for matching money or paying for programs when federal funds dry up.



Resolution Introduced To Extend EMS Act

Rep. Robert H. Mollohan, West Virginia, has introduced H.R. 8212 to extend the EMSS Act and to authorize the expenditure of \$447 million over four fiscal years from 1977 through 1980.

The Emergency Medical Services Systems Act was enacted in 1973 and authorized expenditures of \$185 million over a three-year period that expires June 30, 1976.

As Montana Rep. John Melcher stated in July at an EMS Conference in Billings, "In Montana we have a lot at stake in making sure that it (the EMSS Act) does continue."

Those who are interested in seeing that Mollohan's extension bill receives consideration from Montana's Congressmen can write: Senator Mike Mansfield, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Old Senate Building, Room 133, Washington, D.C. 20510; Senator Lee Metcalf, 427 Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

Representative John Melcher can be reached at the U.S. House of Representatives, 1641 Longworth, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 and Representative Max Baucus is at the U.S. House of Representatives, 1127 Longworth, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Local Stories Needed

The EMS Bureau would like to have persons in local communities submit articles about their activities to the newsletter or submit requests for articles about particular problems they have or information they would like to see.

This grass-roots in-put is especially necessary for the November newsletter because the editor of the EMS Newsletter, Pat Murdo, resigned from the Bureau effective August 29.

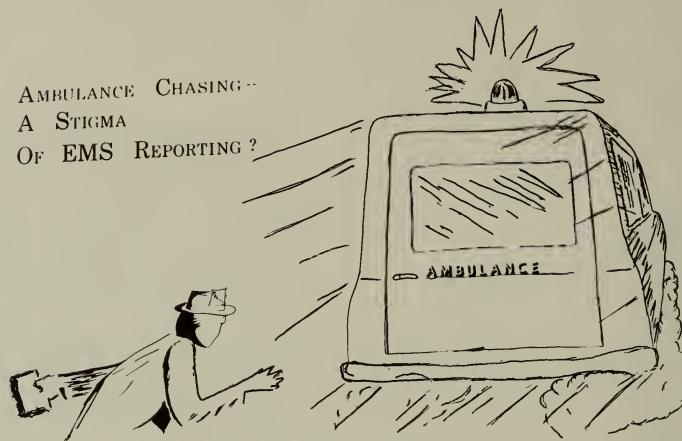
Address all articles or requests for articles to Bob Quam, Chief, EMS Bureau, Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Cogswell Building, Helena MT 59601.

Fear of "Ambulance Chasing" Can Affect EMS Coverage

AMBULANCE CHASING --

A STIGMA

OF EMS REPORTING ?



Editorial:

Most Montana communities have had good support from their local news media. However, in those communities that have not, one problem underlying a lack of EMS reporting might be the stigma of "ambulance chasing."

"Ambulance chasing" is a term sometimes used derisively for the reporter who has no other news to report except an ambulance run.

Some newsmen might not consider reporting about emergency medical services in the same light as reporting ambulance runs. Such reporters have realized there is more to an EMS system than the ambulance service.

In various communities, EMS Councils have become involved in government politics through

attempts to centralize many dispatching functions or create an ambulance mill levy.

Other communities have made EMS newsworthy through the efforts of EMS personnel to involve the community in emergency medical services and to provide services for the public.

If news recognition of the local EMS problems and accomplishments has been lacking or less than desired in your community, then perhaps the news editor or news director hasn't realized the magnitude of an EMS system and still considers emergency medical services reporting to be ambulance chasing. If so, more chats with the newsmen are necessary.

—Pat Murdo

Mill Levied for EMS

Twelve Montana counties and three communities have shown their support of emergency medical services by levying one mill for an ambulance district.

The counties are: Big Horn, Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Glacier, Lake, Liberty, Phillips, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole and Wheatland.

The communities are: Drummond, Philipsburg and Glendive.

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Pat Murdo, guest editor.

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More People Start Working For EMS

New faces and some familiar ones have been chosen for planning positions and other positions funded by the EMS grant recently awarded the state.

Pat Wyse, chairman of the Governor's EMS Advisory Council, has been hired as a planner for the northcentral Montana region.

In the southwestern region, Judy Wilson, former coordinator of the Emergency Medical Technician course at the Butte Vo-Tech, will assume planning duties.

Hired as a regional coordinator for western Montana is Jim Eastham, who has been working at the University of Montana on his master's degree in medical sociology.

Helping Paul Anderson with evaluation and standardized medical record keeping will be Dr. Jack Davis of Kalispell; Bev Ostroot, a registered nurse from Kalispell; John McQuiston, a sociology professor at the University of Montana, and his assistant Peggy Lynam.

The regional coordinator in southeastern Montana will be chosen at a meeting October 11 in Billings by a selection committee of EMS Council representatives from the area and other concerned individuals.

Additional planners have yet to be hired for Glasgow and Helena.

In addition to those hired for fulltime EMS work, the EMS Bureau has contracted the services of Dr. J. Richard Sims, Helena, as a consultant. Dr. Sims is also a member of the Governor's EMS Advisory Council.



EMTs Form Associations

EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) Associations are forming in three Montana communities.

These associations have as their purpose continuing education and a social get-together for members.

Missoula EMTs have adopted formal bylaws for their organization. These bylaws state the association's purpose as providing emergency medical care to Missoula and surrounding communities, providing continuing education and acknowledging the goals of the local EMS Council, Missoula Emergency Services for Health.

In Hamilton, EMTs are also getting together. In addition to learning and socializing, the EMTs offer their services at fairs and moto-cross races. They are also planning first aid and mini-CPR (external heart massage and breathing) classes for the public.

Flathead County EMTs meet once a month for continuing education and for refresher training. They plan to form an association with formal bylaws.

One of the proposals for the EMT Associations is to provide a forum for peer review, to help those EMTs who need practice in certain areas.

Not a bad idea . . .

EMT Training Catches On

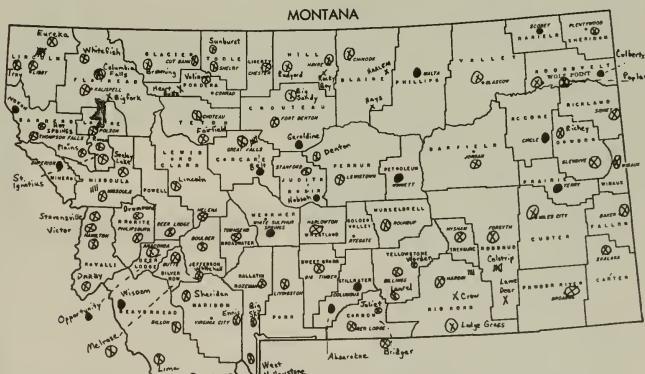
Four years ago in April, 1971, the first Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) were certified in Conrad. As of August, 1975, a total of 1,732 EMTs have been certified in Montana.

Approximately 84 per cent of Montana's ambulance services are staffed with at least one EMT. Only 16 ambulance services are without any.

Although EMT certification is not required of ambulance attendants, the EMS Bureau encourages those who are going to be first responders to take the 81-hour EMT course.

EMT classes began in Boulder on September 2 with Drew Dawson as coordinator, in Sidney on September 3 with Earl Neff as coordinator, in Superior on September 10 with John Jackman as coordinator, in Great Falls at the Vo-Tech on September 16 with Charlie Bicsak as coordinator, at the Butte Vo-Tech on September 22 with Judy Wilson as coordinator and at the Billings Vo-Tech on September 22.

Courses are being planned for Shelby, Anaconda, Townsend and West Yellowstone.



Courses Discussed for Advanced EMTs

The committee charged with setting criteria for Advanced Emergency Medical Technician certification has continued to endorse the modular training approach.

In a report to the Governor's EMS Advisory Council, Drew Dawson noted that eight courses probably will be established and that an EMT could be certified in each field.

The proposed levels of advanced training, which would be established in accordance with national guidelines, are: Advanced Airway Care, I.V. Therapy and Drug Administration, Patient

Monitoring, Cardiovascular Treatment, Other Trauma, Other Medical Emergencies, Extrication and Neonatal Care.

Dawson added that the Bureau is considering adopting the requirement of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians for recertification of basic EMTs. This requirement encourages EMTs to broaden their educational experience in emergency medical services and allows various courses and experiences to be substituted for the currently required 20-hour Department of Transportation standardized refresher course.

District Council Formed

An EMS District Council has formed in northcentral Montana with Dr. Robert Morgan of Conrad as chairman.

Counties united in the council are: Cascade, Chouteau, Teton, Pondera, Liberty, Glacier and Toole.

Plans Made to Computerize EMT Records

A computerized system to keep track of Emergency Medical Technicians, their instructors and dates for refresher courses is being planned by the EMS Bureau.

Drew Dawson said the Bureau is discussing a contract with the Highway Traffic Safety office for funds to develop and implement a

State Seeks Funds To Expand Training

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has made available continued funding for professional training and EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) training at Vocational-Technical Schools, Community Colleges and state colleges.

The EMS Bureau has submitted a grant application for \$120,000 to the regional HEW office in Denver.

Because of the short notice that funds were available and a deadline of September 5 to request monies, the EMS Bureau had little time to seek input from the local communities, Bob Quam, EMS Bureau Chief, said.

The grant proposal includes funds to extend the EMT program to Montana State University in Bozeman and to college extension services at Lewistown and Poplar.

Part of the funds, if received, will be subcontracted to the Montana Medical Education and Research Foundation for physicians' and nurses' continuing education in emergency care.

Forms to be Changed

As part of the Emergency Medical Services evaluation program, the trip report form currently in use by several ambulance services is being redesigned, according to Paul Anderson of the EMS Bureau.

At a recent advisory council meeting, Anderson said that initial evaluation had shown several inadequacies in the form.

The Bureau will develop an information retrieval system that uses a revised ambulance trip report form as its base, Anderson said.

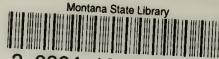
He added that the revision should be completed next spring.

The advisory council recommended that a task force or an ad hoc committee be created to help review evaluation forms as they are designed.

**Emergency Medical Services Bureau
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